

### ***What is the probationary licensing program?***

The probationary licensing program is a way for the Secretary of State to monitor the driving performance of new drivers. **All new drivers are on probation for at least three years** while they gain experience. Being on probation does not affect your driving privileges. It does, however, identify you as a beginning driver.

### ***What is graduated licensing and how is it affected by probation?***

Graduated licensing is a program that integrates education and experience for young drivers.

Your graduated license reduces your risk by limiting driving privileges while you gain experience. The probationary program monitors your driving record and allows the Secretary of State to help you improve if you drive unsafely.

Graduated driver licensing and probation work together to control your driving risk.

Violations or crashes posted to your record show you are not progressing satisfactorily and the Secretary of State may further restrict or even suspend your driving privileges, no matter what your licensing level is!

### ***Does the Secretary of State know if I have been driving unsafely?***

**Yes! Unsafe drivers are identified by the number of “unsafe driving events” (traffic violations and crashes) posted on their driving records.** Any time you are convicted of a traffic violation or have a traffic crash, the Secretary of State is notified of the violation by the

court and records it on your driving record.

The Secretary of State constantly reviews the records of probationary drivers because they are at higher risk of having a crash than most groups of drivers.

### ***What will happen to my driving privilege if I drive unsafely?***

**The Secretary of State will contact you** if you are involved in a traffic crash or receive a traffic conviction.

*If you violate the driving privileges of your graduated driver license, your parent or legal guardian will also be notified!*

The Secretary of State has several programs to encourage you to drive safely.

You may receive self-study material to complete and return to the Secretary of State. You may be required to come into a branch office for a personal review of your driving performance.

A driving record that shows unsafe driving behavior will definitely be cause for a personal review, which is called a driver assessment reexamination. Examples of unsafe driving include speeding convictions, stop sign violations and crashes.

At this review, your driving privilege may be restricted (limiting your full driving privilege) or a suspension may be ordered stating you are not to drive for any reason. You may also be given a combination of restrictions and suspension.

### ***How long will I be on probation?***

**At least three years.** It may last longer than three years if you continue to drive unsafely.

To end your probationary period and become a post-probationary driver, you must drive the last 10 months of your probation-

ary period without having an “at-fault” or “had-been drinking” crash, a driver license suspension, or a traffic conviction.

For example: If you drive two years and 10 months of your three-year probationary period without a crash or traffic conviction and then you receive a speeding ticket (no matter how fast you were driving over the posted limit), your probationary period will be automatically extended until you demonstrate that you can drive **10 consecutive months without a ticket, crash or driver license suspension.**

### ***Must I wear a safety belt?***

**Yes, and for good reason!** Since 1985 all front-seat occupants in Michigan have been **required by law** to wear a safety belt. All youth under age 16, whether riding in the front-seat or back-seat, must wear a safety belt. All toddlers and infants under age four must be buckled in an approved child safety seat when riding in the front-seat and in an approved safety seat or safety belt when riding in the back-seat. Infants under age one must always be in an approved safety seat no matter where seated in the vehicle. The safest place for a child is always the middle of the back seat, properly buckled.

Michigan’s safety belt and child safety passenger laws have helped reduce the number of deaths and crippling injuries on our state’s roads. Always wear your safety belt whether you are the driver or a passenger.

### ***How do the most recent drug and alcohol laws affect me?***

**In several ways!** Most of the newly-enacted alcohol laws relating to “zero tolerance” or “minor in possession” carry a

## *An Important Message*

*Dear New Driver:*

*Your Michigan driver license gives you a very special privilege!*

*During the coming years, your license will allow you to participate in exciting activities and help you meet your everyday transportation needs.*

*We are dedicated to helping you become a safe and responsible driver. To do so, you are in our probationary license program.*

*During the next few years, we will closely monitor your driving record and contact you when your record shows unsafe driving and increasing risk for a possible traffic crash.*

*We will make every effort to help you lower your risk for both violations and traffic crashes, but we also need your help. Please drive responsibly and obey the traffic laws intended to help reduce your risk of being involved in, or causing, a crash.*

*I urge you never to drive when using drugs or alcohol and always wear your safety belt, even while riding in vehicles equipped with air bags.*

*Please read this brochure to learn more about your new probationary driver license and please, **drive Michigan safely!***

*Sincerely,  
Candice S. Miller,  
Secretary of State*



requirement that a driver's license be **suspended upon conviction**. This suspension not only may cause you inconvenience, but can result in more expensive automobile insurance premiums and extensions to your probationary license period.

Learning to drive safely is a full-time activity, and combining the use of alcohol or drugs greatly increases the risk to your safety and that of others. Therefore, penalties are severe. Do not risk a crash or loss of your driving privileges; do not drive when using drugs or alcohol.

If you have questions about your probationary license or need additional information about your graduated license, contact the nearest Secretary of State branch office.

If you prefer, you may write to:

Michigan Department of State  
Bureau of Branch Office Services  
Driver Assessment Unit  
Lansing MI 48919-1601

### **DISABILITY ACCESS:**

The Secretary of State complies with the standards established by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need accommodations, please telephone (517)322-1166 or TYY (517)322-1477.



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